

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 00907 201127Z

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S E C R E T USNATO 0907

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJ: REINFORCED NAC MEETING

REF: USNATO 0903

1. DAVIGNON TELEPHONED ME EVENING FEB 19 TO AMPLIFY DE STAERCKE'S COMMENTS AT PERMREPS LUNCH (REFTEL) THAT IT MIGHT BE INOPPORTUNE" TO HOLD REINFORCED NAC MEETING FEB 28. DAVIGNON SAID BELGIUM WAS READY TO MEET ANY TIME, ANYWHERE. HOWEVER, HE ASKED, WHAT DID WE SEEK TO ACHIEVE? A MEETING LIKE THE DECEMBER PRIVATE NAC MEETING, WHEN NO ONE BUT SECRETARY KISSINGER SPOKE? A MEETING JUST TO SAY ONE HAD BEEN HELD, AND NOT TO HOLD ANY MORE? OR A MEETING TO SERVE SOME USEFUL PURPOSE?

2. IF THE LATTER, HE FEELS THE NINE MUST NOW GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE EIGHT-FRANCE RELATIONSHIP AND HOW THIS RELATIONSHIP AFFECTS THE U.S.-NINE RELATIONSHIP. THE WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE SHOWED THAT THE EIGHT CAN NO LONGER ASSUME THEIR REASONABLE BEHAVIOR WILL BRING THE FRENCH ALONG. THE CONFERENCE, FINE FROM THE STAND-POINTS OF SUBSTANCE, ENERGY AND EIGHT-U.S. RELATIONSHIPS, WAS BAD FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE EIGHT-FRANCE RELATIONSHIP. THE FRENCH HAD SHOWN THEY COULD ADOPT THE MOST REDICULOUS POSTURES.

3. HE FEELS FRENCH BEHAVIOR, HOWEVER, AND THE PROBABLE
SECRET

PAGE 02 NATO 00907 201127Z

FRENCH REALIZATION THEY HAD OVER-REACHED THEMSELVES, PRESENTS THE EIGHT WITH AN OPPORTUNITY THEY SHOULD NOT MISS TO GET THE FRENCH TO AGREE TO SOMETHING IN DEPTH. THIS WILL TAKE AT LEAST ANOTHER FIFTEEN DAYS.

4. OTHERS REALIZE THE OPPORTUNITY, DAVIGNON SAID. THE GERMANS AND OTHERS ARE TALKING ABOUT POSTPONING THE U.S.-NINE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEB 27 UNTIL AFTER THE MARCH 4 EC FONMINS MEETING. TO POSTPONE THE REINFORCED NAC UNTIL AFTER THE FONMINS MEETING WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE PROSPECTS FOR THAT MEETING AND SUBSEQUENT ONES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH U.S. GOALS. AT PRESENT TIME, A MEETING WOULD RESULT IN EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVES BEING UNWILLING TO TALK, BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITY OF NINE RELATIONSHIP.

COMMENT: FROM HERE, DAVIGNON'S ARGUMENTS FOR POSTPONING THE REINFORCED NAC SEEM TO MAKE SENSE, BOTH FROM STAND-POINT OF HIS SUBSTANTIVE ARGUMENTS AS WELL AS CONVENIENCE TO US REPS NOT HAVING TO MAKE TWO TRIPS. I INTEND AT NAC TODAY TO SAY U.S. IS STILL AGREEABLE TO THE 28TH, THAT THE U.S. IS RAISING NO CONFLICT FOR THAT DATE, BUT THAT IN VIEW OF EUROPEAN COMMENTS YESTERDAY, I RECOGNIZE THERE MAY BE FACTORS WHICH ARGUE FOR A LATER DATE, POSSIBLY NEAR MARCH 13. I WILL INDICATE I CAN AGREE TO DELAYING A DECISION FOR A FEW DAYS BEFORE DECIDING AS BETWEEN FEB. 28 AND A DATE IN MID MARCH, TO PROVIDE TIME TO CONSIDER THE NEW FACTORS RAISED IN RECENT DAYS BY SOME EUROPE NATIONS. RUMSFELD

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